



# SOUTHEAST NEWS

PUBLISHED BY THE SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Volume 44, Number 1  
February 1996

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## **1996 ANNUAL MEETING: “Room at God’s Table for All Children”**

The 1996 Southeast Conference Annual Meeting will be held May 31, June 1 and June 2 at the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee. What a beautiful setting for our Annual Meeting this year.

We have two wonderful keynoters this year to help us explore and understand our theme “Room at God’s Table for All Children”—Dr. Allison Phillips, General Secretary for the Division of American Missionary Association of the Board for Homeland Ministries, and the Rev. Mary Miller Brueggemann, recently returned to the Atlanta area from England where she was Chaplain, Westminster College, Cambridge during 1995.

Each will also lead a workshop and will be available for one-on-one conversation about faith issues at other times during the weekend. The Board of Directors met at Sewanee for its January Board Meeting and had an opportunity to tour the facilities.

We will be using the facilities at the School of Theology—housing, dining and meeting space. We will be rooming in regular dormitories, so all beds will be twin size. There are some singles available, (a single room off of a shared convention area). For the most part the rooms are double (meaning 2 single beds to a room). Some of the dormitory rooms have air conditioning; some do not. This will be on a first-register, first-serve basis, though I understand the temperature is always several degrees cooler up at their level. Yes, one can bring fans. Everything we do is in easy walking distance from our rooms and the scenery is wonderful!

Be sure to register early and take advantage of the \$ savings. Wouldn’t it be nice to have the largest turnout ever!

Remember—we expect to have a new Conference Minister present for all of us to meet. Please read the registration form ... over before filling it out. Any questions should be addressed to Nan Wright at the Conference Office.

## **Visions & Voices**

### **3rd National Meeting of UCC Women**

**June 27-30, 1996, Boston, Massachusetts**

This will be an event worth attending! Last *Southeast News* we had a full article ... where you found out that the outstanding keynoters will be Barbara Ehrenreich, June Goudey, and Imani-Sheila Newsome and the preachers will be Bernice Powell Jackson and Christine Smith. There will be high energy indeed at this meeting. And on Saturday evening, June 29, the meeting will be transformed into a bazaar, featuring UCC artisans and crafts-persons from across the United States and around the world displaying and selling their wares as well as gifted UCC performers offering entertainment ... Please note that you must return your registration before March 1st in order to get the discount savings.

## **National Youth Event '96 to be held in Columbia, South Carolina this July**

Plan now to attend the National Youth Event 1996, "*One in the Spirit, Sharing Many Gifts.*" Congregations should already have a registration packet to copy for those who are interested. If not, call the Conference Office—we'll be delighted to send you information.

National Youth Event '96 will be July 25-29, 1996 on the campus of the University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina. Registration begins at Noon on Thursday, July 25. The event opens with worship Thursday evening and ends after breakfast Monday. Each day will include worship, informative speakers, workshops, service projects, meeting new friends, and recreation.

Groups are invited to attend with a minimum of four youth and two adults. (The adults must match the gender of the youth.) There is no maximum group size. Groups with 5 to 15 youth must have three adult advisors. Larger groups must have one adult for each eight youth. Each group will need to designate one adult as the group's "Adult Coordinator." This person will serve as the group's liaison to the NYE Office during the event.

There is space for thirty-seven hundred people. Registration will be first-in/first-registered. Ages—twelve to eighteen and not graduated from high school (however, "just graduated" seniors will be allowed to attend.)

What's the Program? Keynote Speakers and Programs: Millard Fuller, Founder and Director of Habitat for Humanity ... "Who Are We? The UCC!"—Learning about our identity ... "Multicultural Education"—Learning about our diversity.

Worship and Bible Study Leaders include: Youth leadership—Ms. Megan Mumma, preacher; Ms. Precious Witherspoon, preacher; Ms. Marilyn Richards, Bible Study leader, and others. Adult leadership—Dr. Tom Dipko, Executive Vice President of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries; Rev. Edith Guffey, Secretary of the United Church of Christ and many others.

Event Musicians: Chris Grundy; Jeffrey Radford; Brian Sirrchio.

Fellowship: A great variety of nightly "After Hours" programs—coffee houses, movies, snack bar, special theme seminars, and drop-in centers; recreation facilities; the "NYE Carnival" and picnic; dorm vespers; and, off-site voluntary mission projects and over fifty workshops in each of the five workshop sessions.

ALL THIS AND IT'S IN OUR CONFERENCE AREA! TALK TO YOUR YOUTH AND YOUTH LEADERS ABOUT THIS EVENT! IT IS ONE THAT WILL BE TALKED ABOUT FOR YEARS TO COME! *There are youth coming to this event from our partnership conference—IOWA—who would love to "hook-up" with Southeast Conference Youth and get better acquainted. Let the Conference Office know or call us for Charlie Lord or Elizabeth Clement's address and phone number.*

**Celebrate!**

Elizabeth Clement has been selected the new Conference Youth Coordinator.

## **U.C.C. Historical Essay Prize**

The Historical Council of United Church of Christ announces the 1995-1996 competition for the best essay on the history of the United Church of Christ and/or any of its antecedent traditions. That essay which, in the opinion of the judges, shows the best grasp of its subject matter as well as maturity of interpretation will be awarded two hundred dollars (\$200.00) by the Historical Council and will be considered for publication. The judges reserve the right to withhold the award if none of the entries is deemed to be of appropriate quality.

To be eligible for consideration, an essay must have been written by a minister or lay member of the United Church of Christ. The essay must not have been previously published.

Essays should be no more than 4000 words in length (excluding footnotes and bibliography), and be submitted in typed or word-processed, double-space format.

Entries should be submitted to:

The Archivist

United Church of Christ, Schaff Library

Lancaster Theological Seminary

555 West James Street

Lancaster, PA 17603

Entries must be received by the Archivist no later than May 1, 1996 to be considered for the 1995-96 competition. The winner will be announced in the *United Church News* during the summer of 1996.

## **CONFERENCE COMMENTS: ED-itorial**

*It's 1996!* We call it a new year. We even speak of beginning anew. We proclaim a God whom scripture quotes as saying: "Behold, I make all things new." Can the past really be erased? Can one's mind really be

erased? Can one's mind blot out the past by willing it to be so? The mind is a precious gift which makes memories possible, a very special blessing. I have found I can forgive but not necessarily forget. I need the recollection of my past to direct my future. I don't want all those gaps in my past that offer me nothing for the future. I invite the pain and disappointment of the past to be grist for tomorrow's mill for a better future. I do believe life can begin anew without forgetting the past.

A young man lived a riotous life. He had no want for doing evil things. His father's heart was always breaking as he watched his son ruin his life by misdeeds. He refused his father's wise counsel. When the young man's life had reached an abysmal state, he suddenly discovered the meaning of Christ for his life. Unbelievably and suddenly the young man's life changed and he began to live an exemplary life.

His father had a practice that every time the son committed an evil deed, he drove a nail partially into the barn door. There were many, many nails. Upon his conversion to the new way of living, the father took his son and they went to the barn door whereupon the father said, "God has forgiven your sins. You are a new creation." And he pulled out the nails one by one. The son observed that the nails were gone but what about the holes they left in the barn door. "Dad, what do we do about the holes left in the boards?" The father observed that is the way it is with sin. Sin leaves its scars; sin does its work. "The holes you see, son, is what sin does to life. The only way you can deal with these holes is to fill your tomorrows with deeds that upbuild life, that bring healing and wholeness. You see, sin does leave scars but lets them serve as springboards for a life that serves your neighbor and glorifies God."

Memory helps us to not go again where we have been and touched life in ruinous ways. We live with our scars as signs of healing and as inspiration for the healing we can bring to others.

The consequences of some of our sins cannot be removed. That is why the Psalmist counsels us so wisely, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." We are hereby encouraged to look not only at the length of days for our lives but the content of our lives. That is to say, there are sins we may commit that have consequences that will live with us all our days. So, we need to look before we leap.

A corporation executive spoke at the Elmhurst College commencement exercises. He told this personal story. On my way home from my work, there is a well-kept cemetery with some benches scattered about. Often I sit awhile before completing my walk home. On this particular evening, as I sat on this bench, a shabbily dressed fellow sat down next to me. Neither of us spoke. As the man rose to take leave, twice he uttered this phrase, "Life is but a hyphen." I sat mystified at the meaning of his utterance for a good bit. As I was about to dismiss his muttering, my eyes fell upon a tombstone with these dates: 1928-1985. Then the light dawned, "Life is but a hyphen." What will we do with our hyphen? We've been given life with its many gifts and graces, how will we bless life with our hyphen? Life can be empty time or full time. Time only has value in terms of what content we will give the hyphen. So with the Psalmist we reaffirm, "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands, establish thou it." Psalm 90.

Ed Mehlhaff  
Interim Conference Minister

## ***Rev. Mitchell Johnson Retires***

A Word of Closure from Mitch

As I retire from my position as Associate Conference Minister of the Southeast Conference I would like to say how much I have appreciated all of my relationships in this privileged position. I have always been encouraged by your expectations of me and your thoughtful and prayerful support in all that we have tried to do. I have experienced the strategic guidance and collegiality of those more experienced with how things are done in the "Civilian" world as opposed to the military action concept of "Just do it ...!" With this I have learned more patience. Thumbing through the *Book of Worship* I came upon the "Order for the Times of Passage." It includes expressions of "Remembrance and Recognition," a space for "Giving and Sharing Gifts," and a time for "Ending an Authorized Ministry." We have shared some of this process

back last summer. I want to share these words that are a part of the service that we have not shared:

"I thank the Southeast Conference, its members and friends, for the love, kindness and support shown me these last five years. I ask your forgiveness for the mistakes I have made. I am grateful for the different ways my leadership has been accepted, for as I leave this office I will carry ALL I have learned here ..." Helen and I will welcome your being in touch with us at our home, 3605 Greentree Farms Drive, Decatur, GA 30034; Phone 404/284-1181.

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On January 15, 1996, "Mitch," as everyone lovingly calls him, retired after five years of service as Associate Conference Minister in the Southeast Conference. We are most grateful for his labors amongst us. Mitch has touched many lives through his work and friendship, throughout the Southeast Conference and the wider church.

With Mitch's retirement we see the restructuring in the Southeast Conference—moving from one associate conference minister position to the employment of three part-time deployed staff positions to address more easily the needs of local congregations. These three assistants to the Conference Minister, who will be responsible to the Conference Minister, will be deployed in such a fashion that our services will be much closer to the local churches. It was the decision of the Conference that this arrangement would help us address more fully the needs of local congregations.

Mitch has left his mark on the Southeast Conference through his work and through his personal relationships with local churches and individuals. We give hearty thanks for his work amongst us and wish him Godspeed wherever the next chapter of his life leads him. Helen and Mitch, may God bless you real good in your retirement!

## **OCWM GIVING DECEMBER 31, 1995**

|                                      |                      |                  |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| <b>Alabama-Tennessee Association</b> | <b>10/1-12/31/95</b> | <b>1995 OCWM</b> |
| ALPINE, KING'S CHAPEL                | 200.00               | 559.00           |

|                                 |                  |                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| ATHENS, TRINITY CONGREGATIONAL  | 300.00           | 300.00           |
| BELVIDERE, 1ST UNITED CHURCH    | 2,668.00         | 7,563.11         |
| BIRMINGHAM, 1ST CONGREGATIONAL  | 1,400.00         | 5,400.00         |
| BIRMINGHAM, PILGRIM             | 1,800.00         | 5,850.00         |
| CHATTANOOGA, PILGRIM            | 4,386.67         | 13,166.00        |
| CHATTANOOGA, SHEARES MEMORIAL   | 325.00           | 325.00           |
| CROSSVILLE, UCC UCWF            | 0.00             | 335.00           |
| CROSSVILLE, UCC                 | 750.00           | 3,059.75         |
| CULLMAN, ST. JOHN'S             | 2,025.00         | 8,100.00         |
| DEER LODGE, CONGREGATIONAL      | 300.00           | 1,200.00         |
| FAIRFIELD GLADE, COMMUNITY      | 925.00           | 3,700.00         |
| GARDEN CITY, CC                 | 115.50           | 462.00           |
| GLENMARY, CC                    | 0.00             | 0.00             |
| HANCEVILLE, MOUNTAIN GROVE      | 100.00           | 100.00           |
| HUNTSVILLE, UNITED CHURCH       | 1,800.00         | 7,200.00         |
| KNOXVILLE, CHURCH OF THE SAVIOR | 1,701.50         | 1,701.50         |
| MARION, FIRST CONGREGATIONAL    | 200.00           | 200.00           |
| MONTGOMERY, FIRST               | 0.00             | 0.00             |
| NASHVILLE, 1ST UNITED CHURCH    | 1,250.01         | 5,000.04         |
| PLEASANT HILL, COMMUNITY        | 4,125.00         | 16,500.00        |
| SWEETWATER, FIRST               | 0.00             | 250.00           |
| TALLADEGA, FIRST CONGREGATIONAL | 0.00             | 100.00           |
| TOUGALOO, UNION UCC             | 0.00             | 0.00             |
| WAVERLY, UNITED COMMUNITY       | 180.00           | 260.00           |
|                                 | <b>24,551.68</b> | <b>82,634.15</b> |

#### **East Alabama-West Georgia**

|                           |          |          |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|
| ALEXANDER CITY, FIRST     | 0.00     | 0.00     |
| COLUMBUS, UNITED          | 0.00     | 0.00     |
| DADEVILLE, ELDER          | 440.00   | 995.00   |
| EAST TALLASSEE, CC        | 0.00     | 295.00   |
| FIVE POINTS, STATE LINE   | 0.00     | 0.00     |
| LAFAYETTE, PLEASANT GROVE | 514.00   | 1,302.00 |
| LAGRANGE, HILLSIDE        | 0.00     | 0.00     |
| LAGRANGE, UNITED          | 390.00   | 889.00   |
| LANETT                    | 1,332.00 | 3,124.00 |



|                            |                 |                  |
|----------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| PHENIX CITY, RUSSELL WOODS | 380.00          | 1,140.00         |
| PINE FOREST                | 0.00            | 0.00             |
| PINE MOUNTAIN, OAK GROVE   | 0.00            | 600.00           |
| ROANOKE, ANTIOCH           | 0.00            | 570.00           |
| ROANOKE, BETHANY           | 0.00            | 0.00             |
| ROANOKE, FOREST HOME       | 0.00            | 0.00             |
| ROANOKE, NEW HOPE          | 0.00            | 620.00           |
| ROANOKE, NORTH MAIN        | 0.00            | 760.00           |
| VALLEY, TODD CC            | 0.00            | 0.00             |
| WADLEY, CORINTH CHRISTIAN  | 238.00          | 476.00           |
| WEDOWEE, NOON DAY          | 0.00            | 0.00             |
| WEST POINT, BETHEL         | 0.00            | 0.00             |
| WOODBURY, JONES CHAPEL     | 1,186.00        | 2,845.00         |
|                            | <b>4,480.00</b> | <b>13,616.00</b> |

#### **Georgia-South Carolina**

|                                    |          |           |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| ATLANTA, CENTER                    | 225.00   | 225.00    |
| ATLANTA, CENTRAL                   | 6,890.99 | 27,575.96 |
| ATLANTA, FIRST                     | 3,194.42 | 4,914.26  |
| ATLANTA, RUSH                      | 0.00     | 0.00      |
| ATLANTA, SOUTHWEST                 | 0.00     | 0.00      |
| ATLANTA, UCC                       | 0.00     | 0.00      |
| BEACHTON, EVERGREEN CONGREGATIONAL | 0.00     | 0.00      |
| BUFORD, DUNCAN'S CREEK             | 0.00     | 0.00      |
| CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL WOMEN       | 0.00     | 200.00    |
| CHARLESTON, CIRCULAR               | 2,000.02 | 4,666.66  |
| CHARLESTON, PLYMOUTH               | 0.00     | 1,500.00  |
| COLUMBIA, UCC FELLOWSHIP OF        | 75.00    | 200.00    |
| DEMOREST, FEDERATED                | 236.12   | 472.24    |
| DEWY ROSE, LIBERTY                 | 0.00     | 0.00      |
| GA-SC ASSOCIATION                  | 0.00     | 0.00      |
| JONESBORO, TRINITY                 | 0.00     | 1,885.00  |
| MARIETTA, AMISTAD                  | 0.00     | 1,000.00  |
| MARIETTA, PILGRIMAGE               | 3,850.00 | 6,600.00  |
| MIDWAY, CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH      | 200.00   | 600.00    |
| SAVANNAH, FIRST                    | 800.00   | 2,200.00  |

|                                     |                  |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| THOMASVILLE, BETHANY CONGREGATIONAL | 0.00             | 0.00             |
|                                     | <b>17,471.55</b> | <b>52,039.12</b> |

**So. Alabama-N.W. Florida**

|                                  |               |                 |
|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| ANDALUSIA, ANTIOCH               | 0.00          | 500.00          |
| ANDALUSIA, FIRST CC              | 110.00        | 605.00          |
| BAKER, GOOD HOPE                 | 0.00          | 0.00            |
| BAKER, PYRON                     | 0.00          | 0.00            |
| BONIFAY, NEW EFFORT              | 0.00          | 0.00            |
| BRANTLEY, INDIAN CREEK           | 0.00          | 0.00            |
| BRANTLEY, LIBERTY CONGREGATIONAL | 100.00        | 400.00          |
| CLIO, NEW HOPE                   | 0.00          | 0.00            |
|                                  | <b>210.00</b> | <b>1,505.00</b> |

## ***Churches Torched/Burned in Alabama & Tennessee***

Did we pull this title out of an earlier year's newspaper? Sadly, no, we did not. It is going on today and we need to be aware of this and find ways to deal with it ... to help those churches when it happens ... better yet, to prevent its happening in the first place! Most of our information is on the three churches in west Alabama, near the town of Eutaw in Greene County, Alabama. Rodney Franklin, pastor of Birmingham First, sent us a clipping out of the *Birmingham News*, from which the following is taken:

"A group of Eutaw pastors is contributing to a fund to help rebuild three black churches that were burned in Greene County. Members of the Eutaw Ministerial Association denounced at their meeting Wednesday the burnings of Mount Zoar, Little Zion and Mount Zion Baptist churches and pledged support toward rebuilding the churches in the Boligee area. Little Zion and Mount Zoar Baptist were torched Jan. 11. Mount Zion Baptist was burned Dec. 22. Volunteers from Montana plan to help rebuild.

--reported by Val Walton

A fund has been set up which is being administered by the pastors of these three churches (the pastor of Little Zion has been there for almost 50 years and is 92 years old!) The fund: Greene County Emergency Fund, Rt. 1, Box 94, Eutaw, AL 35462. We had a call in the Conference Office from a UCC woman in Silver Springs, Maryland whose church's social justice committee voted to send their local "just peace" monies to help these churches.

Gary Fields and Tom Watson for *USA TODAY* wrote an article entitled "Arson at black churches echoes bigotry of past." Included in their article is a picture of the rubble from the Jan. 8th first at the Inner City Baptist Church. Racist messages were left there. Salem Baptist Church near Fruitland, TN (124 yr. old church) had been burned the week before. In their article they say, "Arsonists have damaged at least 17 churches in Alabama, Louisiana, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas since January 1995. Eleven fires were set in the past two months." Pastors up there are patrolling their churches all week now.

One Bible verse stands out for me: "Thou shalt love the Lord Your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all your strength ... and your neighbor as yourself." If everyone could truly understand and live each moment of each day this way—there would be no more "torchings!" But we can't wait for that. Each of us who does understand must become even more committed to living the Life of Love and Light. So, let us stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters being victimized by the small-minded behavior of a few misguided folk. Funds sent to the Conference Office will be appropriately directed. We will seek out reliable persons in these respective communities with whom we'll communicate. Let's help them rebuild their houses of worship!

## ***Board Approves 2 Exploration Models***

At its January Board Meeting, the Southeast Conference Board of Directors approved two one-year Exploration Models: Covenant Church in Columbia, South Carolina and a new church start at Peachtree City, Georgia. If Columbia is approved by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, Covenant will have a half-time minister beginning July 1, 1996. We anticipate the pastoral leadership of Rev. Nancy Donny,

an experienced pastor of the United Church of Christ. Nancy and the members would appreciate an encouraging letter from your congregation. Her mailing address is: Nancy Donny, 105 Arborgate Circle, Columbia, SC 29212. Her phone is 803/781-0724 (evenings/weekends). Should you want to worship with them some Sunday you will find them at 2924 Wilmont Avenue, Columbia. They meet at 9 a.m. (church phone is 803/781-0724). If Peachtree City is approved, that project will be launched on July 1, 1996 with the Rev. Robin Heckathorne, an experienced pastor, as the organizing pastor for this new Body of Christ. Rob would also appreciate an encouraging word from you. His address: Rob Heckathorne, 424 Script Falls, Peachtree City, GA 30269. His phone is 770/631-0684.

*Any congregation ready to explore a partnership with one of these congregations? Or what about Sheares Memorial? Or, the Heart of Georgia Fellowship? Or, work on South DeKalb? Let's talk. Thank you for your prayers for these and other congregations in the Southeast Conference.*

## **HEAR YE! HEAR YE!**

If you would like Ed Mehlhaff to preach in your church, speak to your pastor and have him check the calendar. Ed has only four possibilities left: March 10, 17; April 14; and May 26. After that he leaves us and goes back to Texas and more retirement.

## ***American Missionary Association— 150th Anniversary***

### **PRELIMINARY CALENDAR**

#### ***January***

First article appears in *UCNews*

UCC Calendar will note AMA event and its significance

Work begins on video, poster, and curriculum to be made available to UCC churches for use in September

Planning begins for Historical Council to sponsor two lectures on AMA history

## **February**

Black History Month

BHM planning committee meets; will include AMA anniversary in its fall meeting

Work begins on a *New Conversations* (all-church mailing) on "The AMA Today"

Request assistance from conference executives; from seminaries

Send free copy of new video on the Amistad event to all UCC conferences and resource centers; to historically black colleges; to seminaries in March

Continue all work begun above

Plan April *Homelander*, which will contain a brief history of the AMA and suggestions for church involvement/discussion

Train BHM staff on these issues

Canvass conferences to see which are interested in a regional meeting on public education

## **April**

AMA college tour

BHM spring meeting—presentations on Native American Christian issues and on public education and the Religious Right—Sioux Falls, S.D.

Mailing of poster, curriculum, discussion guide to all UCC churches. Free video and curriculum will be available to those churches which wish to pursue issues further.

Second *UCNews* article appears

## **May**

Amistad II keel laying (Mystic, Connecticut) (date uncertain)

17-19 May, Conference on *Plessy v. Ferguson* held at Tulane University, New Orleans, LA. (sponsored by Tulane, BHM, Amistad Research Center)

UCC attorney's caucus meets in conjunction with *Plessy*

***June-July-August***

Presentations on AMA history and event made at Women's event, National Youth Event, UBC, and other meetings throughout summer

Third article in *UCNews* appears

*New Conversations* sent to all UCC churches

***September***

AMA 150th Anniversary 3 September. Third *UCNews* articles; all churches have poster and curriculum; those who wish it receive video and more expanded curriculum

Historical Council meets in Cleveland (meeting open to the public); presentation on the AMA

Planning begins on 1997 Meeting (ecumenical, interfaith) on public education for presentation at General Synod, etc.

***October-November***

BHM Board meeting, New Orleans, celebration of history, tour of Amistad Research Center, Art Exhibits, etc., etc.

Throughout 1996-7, BHM staff and corporate members will be available to lead workshops and discussions, make presentations at Conference/Association annual meetings.

## **CONFERENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS DECISIONS**

The Southeast Conference Board of Directors dealt with the following issues at its January 19-20 meeting at Sewanee:

Carroll Heights property disposition. Present tenants be informed of the need to rehabilitate the structure or not use the facilities because of some unsafe conditions.

Further negotiations with the Victory Tabernacle of Praise Church of God in Christ are to take place and a final decision made at the March Board of Directors' Meeting.

Lease signed for another three years for the present office location.

Establish a Task Force to make a long-range study regarding Office of the Conference.

Revision of the Constitution and By-Laws for the Conference is in process. This is necessary due to the new structure to be put in place in this Conference. Conference Minister Search Committee expects to have a candidate to present to the Board at its March meeting. Two one-year Exploration Models for Church Development were approved: Columbia, SC and Peachtree City, GA. If the United Church of Christ Board for Homeland Ministries approves, these projects will begin on July 1, 1996.

Rev. Mehlhaff proposed a Growth Shares plan for the raising of funds, in perpetuity, for Evangelism and Church Development. The plan was defeated. Education of the Board of Directors on Church Development policies and procedures is to take place in its subsequent meetings. Motions were made to celebrate Ann Ariail's superior work as Disaster Relief Coordinator and to thank Lester Ariail and Nancy Donny for their leadership in developing new congregations.

The Board of Directors is scheduled to meet on March 15-16 at Simpsonwood.

## ***Southeast Conference Retreat Center***

An update on the standing of the Southeast Conference Retreat Center is that we are having a team training meeting at Pleasant Grove Congregational Christian Church on the 24th of February. These teams will be seeking to visit your congregation to bring accurate information about the Retreat Center. When this factual data is brought to your congregation you will better be able to make informed responses to the Retreat Center proposal. Please be open a visit from a team that will be contacting you to visit with your congregation, decision-makers of your church included. It is right and good that we make a studied response to Miss Lala Allen's generous offering of 100 acres of land fit for a Retreat Center site. The teams will have to have their visits completed by mid-May in order to bring the findings to the Annual Meeting. We hope to make some definitive decisions at the 1996 Annual Meeting of the Conference. Let us be in prayer as we assess the challenge before us.

## ***Clergy Conversation Gatherings***

Response to these gatherings has been good. Those who come always seem to leave feeling refreshed and renewed. If you have not been able to make one yet, mark your calendar for one of the following, bring a "brown bag lunch" and come enjoy the fellowship and conversation. Please remember, these are for ALL CLERGY, not just those serving in pastor positions. And, yes, it includes retired clergy as well. The latest round has already begun with 2/16 at Birmingham 1st. Tuesday, Feb. 27, Chattanooga Pilgrim, 10-2; Monday, March 11, Andalusia First, 6:30-9 p.m.; Tuesday, March 12, Lanett Congregational Christian, 10-2; Tuesday, March 19, Atlanta Center, 10-2; Wednesday, March 20, Vanderbilt Divinity School, Nashville, 11-1:30, box lunch available, call Dan Rosemergy at (615) 352-4702.

## ***"Doing Science is a Form of Worship"***

**by Olivia White**

The UCC's Science, Technology and Religion Working Group heard this provocative statement from Dr. Francis S. Collins, Director of the National Center for Human Genome Research, when they were given an inside glimpse at a meeting at the National Institute of Health in October. Since a focus of the working group is the moral and ethical implications of genetic technology it was important to talk to scientists directly involved in this research. The group was privileged to have a conversation with Dr. Francis S. Collins, a presentation by Dr. Mark Hughes about clinical diagnostic application and a visit to the Gene Therapy Laboratory led by Dr. Peter Nelson. This kind of opportunity is very rare and uncommon for a church group. The fact that these outstanding researchers took time from their busy schedule to talk to this group shows a commitment on their part to affirm the connection between the religious community and scientific community.

Dr. Francis Collins emphasized the importance of the relationship between science and the church. "It is terribly wrong to conclude that the



church is irrelevant to science ... Science is not the enemy ... doing science is a noble occupation, even a form of worship.”

Dr. Mark Hughes, in his presentation, explained a most complicated diagnostic technique known as the “pre-implantation diagnosis after in vitro fertilization (IVF).” To some it may sound like science fiction that eggs are fertilized in the laboratory and once they divide and reach the eight-cell stage, a single cell is removed. The DNA is amplified and used to diagnose a specific genetic disorder. If the test shows no genetic disorder, the remaining seven-celled embryo is implanted in the uterus. With this procedure parents would not have to face the decision of pregnancy termination. The procedure promises the diagnosis of a variety of genetic disorders.

After this kind of visit and tour one could see why Dr. Collins said that doing science was a form of worship. To worship God is to affirm God’s creation.

*Olivia Masih White, Ph.D., is Assistant Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, University of North Texas. She serves as a Board member for Back Bay Mission and the UCC Board for Homeland Ministries. Norma S. Mengel, CHHSM’s Associate for Program, serves as CHHSM’s representative on the UCC Working Group.*

## **“GOOD NEWS”: Response Through ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**

Disasters, wars, social upheaval—overwhelmed by the bad news and suffering in our world? Ever wonder what you and your church can do to make a difference out there?

GOOD NEWS! If you have given to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) in the past, you have ALREADY made a difference in the lives of many people here at home and across the globe. One Great Hour of Sharing gifts have been turning bad news into good news for close to 50 years. During last year alone, One Great Hour of Sharing funds supported disaster relief in the U.S., medical teams in Rwanda, reconstruction

programs in Haiti, and various relief efforts in former Yugoslavia. GOOD NEWS—One Great Hour of Sharing does make a difference!

Remember the bad news of Hurricane Opal's destruction in the Florida Panhandle last summer? Did you hear the GOOD NEWS that within 48 hours of request for assistance \$10,000 in OGHS funds was made available to help those in need? Then there was the devastating civil war in Rwanda—did you know the GOOD NEWS that over \$1 million has been provided since then to meet the ongoing needs of these refugees? More GOOD NEWS—Haitian refugees are no longer in the headlines, but OGHS gifts remain at work, helping them to begin a new life in their homeland. Remember the war in the former Yugoslavia? Do you know the GOOD NEWS that One Great Hour of Sharing has provided over \$7.5 million to that part of the world for food, aid, blankets, medical supplies, clothing, and general relief?

You see! There is a way to act in faith to counter the bad news of this world. Don't give in to despair! Instead, dare to share! Dare to believe your compassion and efforts DO make a difference in the world. DARE TO SHARE through One Great Hour of Sharing because:

You are the light of the world!

The need is great!

OGHS has proven for 50 years it makes a difference!

Thru OGHS we build community in the church and the world—we strengthen our ecumenical family!

Quite simply—this is the work of the Christ—it helps mend lives, promotes health and wholeness, gives displaced families a new start on their lives!

Give because by giving, you help bring LIGHT and GOOD NEWS to places where it is desperately needed.

Sunday, March 17, 1996 is when the One Great Hour of Sharing All-Church Offering will be received in our worship services. We have many fine "tools" available to help you take part in this year's One Great Hour of Sharing campaign:

The brand new "Dare to Share video" (11 mins.)—shows human connections you make when you give to those in need thru OGHS (free thru UCC Resources, 1-800-325-7061).

Decorative coin boxes to receive small gifts from children and adults.

World Stamp Maps—helps increase understanding of OGHS projects around the world.

Sharing calendars, posters, bulletin inserts & program ideas—use creatively—adapt as you choose. These materials have already been sent to your church. Contact your pastor and say (that) you would like to help with this year's "Dare to Share" campaign! (If you need more materials or did not receive yours, call the above 800 number).

Written by John Gill, World Board SEC Conference Convener, Church of the Savior, Knoxville, Tennessee.

### ***"I Was A Stranger and You Invited Me In"*** **(Matthew 25:35)**

Jeanne Ndagara is described by her pastor, the Rev. Flora Wilson-Bridges, as "an exceptional woman whose faith is deep."

After her husband was killed, Jeanne and her three children were forced to flee for their lives from the violence in Zaire. The family escaped at night, hiding in the back of a coffee truck. After four arduous days of travel they reached safety in Kenya—and then waited two years in a refugee camp before they were permitted to seek asylum in the United States.

Jeanne, 33, and her children were sponsored by Amistad UCC, a new church start in Marietta, Georgia. Initially, the family stayed at the home of Joyce and John Stephens and was supported by Amistad members who provided clothing, toiletries, toys and other basic necessities.

Jeanne and her children are now quickly moving toward self-sufficiency. She passed her driving exam and excelled in her English classes. An active member of Amistad, Jeanne helps provide leadership with other church members as they minister to their second refugee family from Zaire.

Jeanne's home is a haven for other refugee women who experience cultural conflicts and marital frictions. She has traveled to Florida,

Maryland, Washington, D.C., and Virginia to visit other Zairian refugees who have endured traumatic upheavals.

Your generous giving to One Great Hour of Sharing empowers the people in our UCC network of churches and ecumenical organizations in their commitment to the compassionate ministry of welcoming refugees. In 1994, there were 1,059 refugees who were sponsored through the United Church Board for World Ministries and by 144 local UCC churches.

## ***Created in God's Image Workshop***

*"CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE" Workshop [Ginny Nixon, United Church of Huntsville, 205/880-9563 (H)]*

Men and women ranging in age from mid-twenties to well past sixty met at Central Congregational Church in Atlanta from January 18-20 to learn more about "Created in God's Image," the United Church of Christ curriculum which examines issues of human sexuality.

Faith Johnson, a Board of Homeland Ministries staff person who was one of the workshop leaders, has been a part of developing and implementing this curriculum for more than ten years. As specific issues related to sexuality came before denominational meetings, it was recognized that an understanding of the whole range of sexuality as a part of God's creation was missing in most people's Christian education. An extensive grassroots survey was a part of the curriculum development to assure that it was rooted in and related to the lives of the members of our churches. After all of the groundwork and field testing, this ten-week course is now available.

Bob Koenig, retired Board for Homeland Ministries staff, worked with Faith to lead the two-day-long workshop. Together they demonstrated the individual and group activities that are built into the interactive program. Study materials are also provided for both participants and leaders. These contain much factual information as well as presenting a variety of issues for discussion.

Some of the subjects touched on during the sessions were the Biblical heritage of embodiment which unites our spiritual and physical aspects, early learning about sexuality, life-affirming ethical standards based on mutuality, love, and justice, and the church and church member

role in public advocacy on public policies related to sexuality (such as sexual violence, teen pregnancy, censorship, and discrimination).

Clear goals and norms set by the group members themselves assured that each person could participate at a level comfortable for himself or herself. After the opening sessions introduced and modeled the course, group members became actively involved in leading sessions themselves.

In addition to group leadership training, other participants considered the "Ministry and Mission" implications of the curriculum, an aspect important enough to be expressed in the subtitle, "A Human Sexuality Program for Ministry and Mission." A team leadership approach is a key ingredient of "Created in God's Image."

The thirty people who came to the January workshop included representatives from eight churches. Four of these individuals have agreed to be on a team which has been established to help implement the curriculum in the Southeast Conference. Members of this team are available to work with any church considering a program to examine these critically important issues in the light of our Christian faith.

More information on "Created in God's Image" will be available at the annual meeting at Sewanee. Interested people may also contact any member of the Southeast Conference team:

Joe Hoffman, Central Congregational UCC, 2676 Clairmont Road N.E., Atlanta, GA 30329; 404/633-4505.

Dan Rosemergy, Brookmeade Congregational UCC, 700 Bresslyn Road, Nashville, TN 37205; 615/352-4702.

Barbara Everett, 2005 Blue Creek Road, Tullahoma, TN 37388; 615/455-6312 (home).

Jim Norris, United Church of Huntsville, 7906 Whitesburg Drive, Huntsville, AL 35802; 205/881-3132.

## ***1996 Annual Meeting Keynoters***

*We are blessed this year to have two sought-after keynoters for our Annual Meeting. Both Dr. Allison Phillips and Rev. Mary Brueggemann are skilled laborers in the life of the United Church of Christ. They are 21st-century visionaries and actively involved in living the faith journey. Dr. Phillips will*

*keynote during Friday evening and Sunday morning worship as well as lead a workshop on "Race Relations Today" and Rev. Brueggemann will keynote during Saturday morning worship and lead a workshop on "Issues Facing Women in the Church Today." These are special people with special gifts. You'll want to be enriched and inspired by their presentations and personalities.*

The Rev. Dr. F. Allison Phillips, General Secretary for the American Missionary Association, United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, received his Master of Divinity degree from Colgate Rochester Divinity School in 1967. For the next 3-4 years he served as Executive Director, Garrison Boulevard Community Development Center in Baltimore, MD. Moving to South Bronx, NY in 1971, Dr. Phillips served as pastor for North Congregational Church while he earned his Master of Sacred Theology ('75) and his Doctor of Ministry ('80) from New York Theological Seminary. From there he answered a call in 1982 to the Mount Zion Congregational UCC in Cleveland, serving there as pastor until he became General Secretary for the American Missionary Association in 1994. Dr. Phillips maintains an interest in community affairs and is currently serving on the Board of Trustees for East Side Interfaith Ministries, Leadership Cleveland, and the Urban League of Greater Cleveland. Dr. Phillips and his wife Velma have two daughters (Saidah and Alyson) and three grandchildren (Jason, Janell, and Jawel).

The Rev. Mary Miller Brueggemann is an ordained minister who has her standing right here in the Georgia/South Carolina Association of the Southeast Conference! Mary and her husband Walter live in Decatur, GA. In 1961 Mary completed Graduate Studies in New Testament at Union Theological Seminary, NY. She earned her Master of Divinity in 1976 from Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO and her Certificate for Interim Ministry in 1976. Mary was interim minister at Central Congregational in Atlanta in 1988, interim associate of Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society, UCC, 1989-90, and was administrator of Faith Works '94 UCC, from '91-'94. She has just returned from a year in England where she was chaplain at Westminster College in Cambridge. Currently Mary's volunteer work includes serving at the national level on the Board of

Directors for the Office of Communication, UCC, as well as serving as a member of the Transition Coordinating Committee, UCC. Mary and Walter have two sons (John and James).

## ***Guidelines for Presentation and Consideration of Resolutions/ Statement of Concerns***

I. Delegates, local congregations and committees, individuals with endorsement of a local church council, and Conference Program Units, may submit Resolutions or Statements of Concern for the Annual Meeting by March 23, 1996. They should be mailed to the attention of Resolutions/Concerns Chairperson, 756 West Peachtree Street N.W., Atlanta, GA 30308.

II. Two vehicles for presentation of issues or concerns are provided for at the 1996 Annual Meeting.

A. Resolution: This is the way that concerns or issues may be brought to a decision at the Annual Meeting. A Resolution must have implications affecting the program and/or the budget of the Conference. Resolutions may be acted upon under Robert's Rules of Order or may be considered by consensus, with the options of stating consensus, stating areas of consensus and areas of difference, or waiting for future enlightenment and discernment. The Resolutions/Concerns Moderator and Minister will determine how a resolution will be acted upon after hearing discussion. To overrule this decision, a motion for a two-thirds majority vote must be made, seconded and passed by the Conference voting members.

B. Statement of Concern: This is the way that concerns or issues are brought to the attention of the Conference for consciousness-raising, research and reflection, educational purposes and mobilization of individual or local church consideration. Statements of Concern will be presented to the Annual Meeting in the following ways: for limited discussion on the floor without a vote; for a forum or panel presentation; as a position paper presented for distribution and/or presentation only.

How a Statement of Concern will be presented will be determined by the Business or Resolutions/Concerns Committee. A Statement's contact person will be notified as to how his/her issue will be presented. The voting members of the Conference may request with a simple majority vote to have any particular Statement of Concern referred to the appropriate committee of the Conference for further research and reflection; or by request of the Resolutions/Concerns Committee Chair, delegates may be polled informally to determine current views of the issues involved in any particular Statement of Concern.

III. In order to insure thoughtful consideration by the Annual Meeting, the following components should be included in a Resolution or Statement of Concern (limit of two pages): Title/subject of the Resolution or Statement of Concern name, address and phone number of contact person and presenter, if these are different, concise background leading to the submission, theological/biblical perspective, clear wording of the actual Resolution or Statement, and in the case of a Resolution, the action being requested of the Annual Meeting should be highlighted in a summary statement beginning with "Be it resolved ...". Also in the case of a Resolution, itemized budget implications for the Conference and a time frame for achieving the requested action, program implication for the Conference, associations, and/or local implications and relationship to present Conference directions, if possible.

IV. The Resolutions/Concerns Committee will review all Resolutions and Statements of Concern and/or:

- A. If warranted, correlate and establish communication between or among proponents of similar Resolutions or Statements.

- B. If necessary, negotiate with proponents any Resolutions or statements deemed inappropriate for consideration in their present form.

- C. If appropriate, refer to the proper Conference committee for their review and preparation of comment and clarification.

- D. If necessary, reject for inclusion on the Annual Meeting agenda, any Resolution or Statement of Concern inconsistent with the mission and ministries of the Southeast Conference.



V. The Resolutions/Concerns Committee may, at its direction, add items to the agenda upon request and adequate explanation as to why the Resolution or Statement of Concern could not have been submitted by the specified date. If a late submission is accepted, it shall be the responsibility of the presenter to provide adequate copies for all delegates.

*If there are any questions regarding these procedures, please contact Reverend Bob Kurtz, St. John's United Church, P.O. Box 924, Cullman, AL 35056-0924; Phone: (205) 734-0344.*

## ***Dr. T, the Caring Clown***

Pilgrimage UCC, Marietta, GA has a special group of people who do Clown Ministry at Kennestone and Scottish Rite hospitals on a regular basis. They are the church's Clown Troupe led by Dr. T (Pastor Tim Morrison). Each month they visit patients at Scottish Rite and at Kennestone, seeking to bring a smile to faces, a touch of happiness to the hearts. Sometimes the real outreach is to the patients whose hearts are heavy watching the anguish of their child. And always they touch the hearts of the hospital staff as well as their patients.

Picture this: a volunteer is leading the clown troupe around Scottish Rite and Dr. T hears a child around 5 years of age, crying. He sees a nurse in the room and pauses at the door. "May I come in?" he asks. The child nods yes, still crying. "I carry special medicine to take care of crying," says Dr. T as he frantically searches through the 10 pockets of his uniform/costume until he finds a vial of his "Dr. T's Stress Relief medicine." He opens it and begins blowing magic soap bubbles. The bubbles glisten in the light of the room. The child stops crying as he watches the bubbles. "Watch," encourages Dr. T, "if you study the bubbles closely, you can pick out the one to catch and hold." Dr. T's hand moves quickly and he finds just the right bubble to grasp between his fingers, holding it firmly so the child can see its beauty. The young lad sits in his bed smiling and laughing. Dr. T laughs with him and winks to the nurse saying, "I guess I did have the right medicine." He hands the child a sticker that reads, "I met a clown today" and goes off to share his medicine of love with other children.

Clowning is a very personal art. To do it well takes hard work, hunger for learning, compassion and dedication. Because of the clown ministry interest at Pilgrimage, Tim invited the Rev. Philip Noble, and Episcopalian priest from Prestwick, Scotland, to conduct a clown ministry workshop for the Pilgrimage congregation and other interested “clowns” from other area churches, Saturday, January 20th. The culmination of their time together would be their participation in the Sunday morning worship service. By the way, Rev. Noble (“Rainbow” is his clown identity) is the only clown/minister in Scotland! Both Philip and Tim say the most difficult aspect of developing a character is coming up with a make-up scheme that fits the personality. “If you’re going to be a clown, you’ve got to find a face that’s within the real face that is within” (Tim) “and as the character develops, the make-up becomes less” (Philip). The master of mime Marcel Marceau defines clowning as “the language of the heart.” Properly approached, clown ministry is always this, both within the worship service as well as in the outreach areas such as hospitals, for the language of the heart is the sharing of God’s love.

## ***Call for Iowa-Southeast Partnership Work Camp***

We will have an exciting chance this June to rub shoulders and share devotions and learn United Church of Christ ways with Iowa folk. We will also be able to contribute to the work of God and Iowa’s camping program by helping finish a new building, and repairing and freshening up the campground for the 1996 season.

- When: Sunday, June 2-Saturday, June 8
- Where: Pilgrim Heights Campground, Montour, Iowa
- Cost: Sharing travel expenses. We hope churches will subsidize these.
- Who: Anyone in Southeast Conference 12 years old and up who has a willing heart and can wield a hammer, paintbrush, can cook or clean up.

Housing: One big cabin with frig, freezer, big kitchen, large dining room, two cabins with 16 bunks each, restrooms and showers.

*Space is limited, so sign up now. Registration forms are available from the Conference Office and will soon be in your local church office. First 20 applicants will be taken.*

This opportunity is immediately after our Annual Meeting and immediately before the Iowa Annual Meeting (held about 40 miles from Montour) so we have a great opportunity to also attend their Annual Meeting before returning to our homes.

## ***SEC National Committee Representatives & Delegates***

*This is a listing of those persons within our Conference who are serving on national committees and boards. If we have missed someone, please let us know.*

### **United Church Board for Homeland Ministries Board of Directors**

Class of 1997: Mrs. Mary Cooper Marshall

#### **Corporate Members**

Class of 1997, Laypersons: Dr. Richard C. Braun

Class of 1999, Laypersons: Dr. Annie W. Neal, Mr. James Mac Hunter, Mr. David Mann

Class of 1999, Clergy: The Rev. Kenneth E. Briggs, Jr.

Class of 2001, Laypersons: Ms. Kim Ward

### **United Church Board for World Ministries Board of Directors**

Class of 1997: Ms. Vanessa Robbs

#### **Corporate Members**

Class of 1999, Laypersons: Ms. Vanessa L. Robbs

Class of 1999, Clergy: The Rev. Frances L. Bryant, The Rev. Karl Whiteman  
Class of 2001, Clergy: The Rev. Rodney Franklin, The Rev. John Bluth Gill

### **Nominating Committee, 21st General Synod**

Class of 2001, Clergy: The Rev. Susan Newman

### **Office of Communication**

#### **Board of Directors**

Class of 1997: The Rev. Mary Brueggemann

### **Office for Church in Society**

#### **Directorate**

Class of 1997: Ms. Cynthia Tucker

### **Office for Church Life & Leadership**

#### **Directorate**

Class of 1999: Mr. Jon Gunnemann

Class of 2001, Laypersons: Dr. Thomas Zimmerman

### **Stewardship Council**

#### **Directorate**

Class of 1999: Mr. Marvin Mangham, Jr.

### **United Church of Christ Ecumenical Representatives**

#### **Representative to the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches:**

The Rev. Karl Fung

### **UCC/DOC Ecumenical Partnership Committee:**

Class of 1997: Dr. Erna Bryant

## ***Wear A Prayer!***

***"They're not just faceless names."***

Refugees caught up in the violence in the former Yugoslavia are people who need our prayers. They have family and/or friends who have requested prayer for their safety and well being. They are directly connected to the UCC through our refugee resettlement work.

For each \$10 donation sent to the UCBWM Office for the Global Sharing of Resources, you will receive the name of a refugee inscribed on a simple cloth wristband, a comprehensive report interpreting the conflict and describing UCC response, and a suggested prayer. The report was written by Kenneth Ziebell, area executive for the Joint Europe Office of the Disciples and the UCC.

Contributors are asked to pray daily for the refugee whose name is on their wristband, and for the restoration of peace in the Balkans. All proceeds go to the Church World Service War Emergency Appeal to assist refugees and other vulnerable persons—regardless of religious, political or national identity.

The refugees were identified by UCBWM Refugee Resettlement Office staff, who, according to administrator Mary Kuenning Gross, received the names of resettled Bosnians through their network of Church World Service affiliates. The Bosnians have “tremendous concerns” for friends and loved ones in jeopardy, and are anxious for prayer support.

Judy Smith, Director of Community Refugee Ecumenical Outreach, Arlington, VA, wrote, “Let me commend you for this initiative. After talking to our Bosnians, I have been moved to tears by how much they appreciate our prayers. They, and we, feel so helpless in the face of the violence and death which these people experience. Only God Almighty can help. Thanks for the opportunity to show these refugees that we care.”

The wristbands were the idea of Southwest Ohio/Northern Kentucky Association Minister Jane Fisler Hoffman who, through her prayer life, began thinking of images such as “the bracelets many of us had during the Vietnam War when we linked in prayer with a serviceperson whose name we wore on the band.”

Send donations for prayer bands to the UCBWM’s Office for the Global Sharing of Resources at 475 Riverside Drive, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10115. Make checks out to the UCBWM and write “Wear A Prayer” on the memo portion of the check.

## **Response for Northeast—US Flooding**

*from Linda Petrucelli, Secretary for Global Sharing of Resourcing*

The United Church Board for World Ministries will shortly be sending \$10,000 in response to this appeal and has already sent \$2,000 to the New York Conference in response to a request from Associate Conference Minister Judith Hjorth. We stand ready to respond to requests from other conferences as well. Please tell local churches wishing to send directed gifts for disaster response to use the designation “Northeastern U.S. Flooding.” This regional appeal will allow for flexibility in directing timely support to affected areas. We encourage you to communicate to your local churches that if they would like to direct gifts for flood response in the Northeastern United States they utilize this designation.

## ***Clergy Job Satisfaction***

One of our UCC ministers, Rev. Elaine McDuff, a doctoral candidate in Sociology at the University of Iowa, is completing her dissertation on the sources of job satisfaction and local church commitment for parish ministers. Part of her research will be based on this study being directed by Rev. McDuff and Dr. Charles W. Mueller, Professor of Sociology at the University. The study will be based on a survey of parish clergy in the UCC and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Surveys will be sent to a sample of clergy in both denominations in early March. Ministers receiving a copy of the survey are encouraged to complete the survey and return it promptly. (Remember when you were doing this sort of thing? It shouldn't take you more than about 30 minutes.) Survey results will be shared with both denominations and will be made available to clergy.

## ***Thank You, Southeast Conference!***

Alfred Jones, Steward for Mission Connection for the Stewardship Council at our national offices in Cleveland wrote the following to Ed Mehlhaff and asked him to pass it on.

"I am writing to ask you to convey to your Conference colleagues, officers, and churches our profound gratitude for your December contribution of \$10,000 to the National Basic Support of Our Church's Wider Mission received this month.

"Your Conference gifts, along with those of others, make possible such exciting and vital ministries of the UCC as the Health and Welfare Coordinating Council of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, which coordinates the Health Care for All Priority, monitors welfare reform activities, and studies the ways local churches get involved in improving the health and welfare of their members. Through the giving ... we are all connected, bound together, in one great circle of witness and hope."

## ***Southeast Conference Women's Retreat***

*"For Such a Time as This," September 20-22, 1996*

Friday through Sunday, September 20-22, 1996 are important dates for all women of the Southeast Conference! Put them on your calendar now, for they are the dates for our fall retreat which will be held at Shocco Springs Conference Center in Talladega, Alabama. This promises to be an exciting retreat that everyone will enjoy, so—come one, come all! The enthusiasm and conscientious efforts which prevailed during the first planning session held on January 24 are propelling us forward. We are delighted to announce that the Rev. Linda Petrucelli, Secretary for the Global Sharing of Resources, United Church Board for World Ministries, will be our keynote speaker. In addition, we will share together in worship, workshops, and through panelists who will lift up the theme, "For Such a Time As This." Come and join with us for fellowship, renewal and enrichment!

## ***Keep Women's Mite Alive***

Women's Mite was established several years ago by the Commission for Women in Church and Society. We saw the need for a scholarship fund, available to women in the Southeast Conference who desire financial assistance to attend women's meetings associated with

the United Church of Christ. This fund has proved to be invaluable and we feel it is of the utmost importance to keep it alive. So we are asking all women in the Conference to set aside five cents a day (\$.05/day) for one year (\$18.25 total). Won't you please make your contribution to this fund?! We both request and strongly encourage it. We are preparing updated application and remittance forms for these scholarships which will be available soon. Until then, send your contribution to the Southeast Conference UCC, 756 West Peachtree Street N.W., Atlanta, GA 30308, Attention: Women's Mite. Make your checks payable to the Southeast Conference and put Women's Mite down in the lower left corner of the check. Requests for scholarships should be sent to Kathryn Robinson, 829 46th Street North, Birmingham, AL 35212. Time will be allotted for the dedication of all contributions at our Fall Retreat in Shocco Springs this September 20-22. Keeping "Women's Mite" alive is an excellent way to share our Christian love!

## **AROUND THE CONFERENCE**

Savannah First has chosen a new pastor. The Rev. Herbert Carey will begin his ministry with them in early April. Congratulations!

Tommy Felton Kirk is the new pastor at North Main Congregational Christian in Roanoke, Alabama. Tommy and his wife, Danissa, have a one-year-old baby boy, Caleb.

Blessings and happy retirement to the Rev. Floyd Carmack, who retired from Trinity, Jonesboro, GA the end of January after 30 years of ministry there. The clergy had a "thank you" luncheon for Floyd and Jerri in Atlanta February 7th.

The Rev. John W. Mingus, Sr., pastor of Chattanooga Pilgrim, and Kimberly Hunt were married in late November. The congregation honored them with a lovely reception Sunday, December 17th in the church parlor.

Dick and Trudy Braun are spending a few weeks in the Southwest on an Indian reservation where Dick is doing service work.



The Reverends Walter and Mary Brueggemann have returned from Cambridge, England, where they spent the last year. Mary will be one of our keynoters for the 1996 Southeast Conference Annual Meeting.

The Rev. Paul Sherry, President of the United Church of Christ, will be coming to Birmingham Pilgrim Congregational UCC to preach on Sunday, June 23rd. There will be opportunity for lunch and conversation following the service.

*For your prayer list ...*

The Rev. David Naglee was hospitalized over the New Year but has recovered nicely and is back to preaching! David pastors at United Congregational Christian, LaGrange.

The Rev. Joe Brown is back in the hospital for the second round of chemo as I type this. He has had cards from some of you and they really help. His address: P.O. Box 186, Milligan, FL 32537. Joe is chair of Church and Ministry for the South Alabama/Northwest Florida Association.

The Rev. Leonard Stark continues to recover from a stroke he had over Thanksgiving. His address: P.O. Box 183, Pleasant Hill, TN 38578.

The Rev. James O'Brien, interim pastor at Atlanta Central, had gall bladder surgery January 20th and is recovering very well. He returned to preaching February 11th.

The Rev. Karl Whiteman's mother, Leanore, is at home under hospice care. Please remember all of them, Leanore, husband Glen, Karl and his wife Jan as they move through this difficult time. Address: Glen and Leanore Whiteman, 508 Whip-poor-will Drive, Sebring, FL 33872. Cards are welcome.

*Our sympathy is extended to ...*

The Rev. Leon Dickinson, whose wife Irene died while they were in Florida December 31st. Leon's address: P.O. Box 39, Pleasant Hill, TN 38578.

Pastor Chris Hester, whose father Elmer Hester died January 24th in LaGrange. Chris's address: 486 Lower Big Springs Road, LaGrange, GA 30240.

The Rev. Kenneth Briggs and wife Karla, whose granddaughter Kennedy Taylor Pratt died of AIDS January 21st. Kennedy was 3 months old and the child of their daughter and son-in-law. Ken's address: 1111 County Road 69, Tuskegee, AL 36083.

## ***Georgia Christian Council of Churches***

Do you know the Georgia Christian Council meets three times a year? Do you know there are 20 judicatories represented? Do you know the UCC board members are Ed Mehlhaff (Conference Minister), David Menchhofer, and Floyd Carmack?

Your Georgia Christian Council officers are: President: Rev. Anne Sayre, Presbyterian, Atlanta; President-Elect: Bishop Othal Lokey, Christian Methodist Episcopal, Sixth District, Atlanta, GA; Treasurer: Rev. Bill Baguell, United Methodist Church, Lyons, GA; Secretary: Father Michael J. Kavanaugh, Roman Catholic Diocese of Savannah, GA.

## ***Christian Social Justice Commission Policies and Procedures for Grant Applications***

Involvement in issues of social justice is a hallmark of the UCC, and there is funding available to assist in addressing such issues. In applying for funds, especially on the national level, it is important to remember the distinction between social action and direct service—social action tends to focus on advocacy and policy-making rather than on providing direct services to individuals. Priority is generally given to projects that involve social action.

### ***SEC Funding***

*Funds Available.* There are two funds that are administered by the Christian Social Justice Commission within the Southeast Conference: Just

Peace and Hunger Action. Each represents a percentage of the money collected by churches in the Conference in those special appeal offerings (25% of Just Peace and 20% of Hunger Action).

*Application Deadline.* Application forms are available through the Conference Office by April 1 of each year. Members of the SEC Commission on Christian Social Justice will review all applications submitted, and funds will be presented at the SEC Annual Meeting in June.

### *Other Funding*

*Sources.* There is no one centralized funding source within the UCC for social justice projects. Funds are available from such bodies as the Office for Church in Society, Commission on Racial Justice, Hunger Action Appeal, American Missionary Society, etc.

*Endorsements.* Applications for funding within the broader UCC require endorsement from the Conference. In order to apply for SEC endorsement, the application form needs to be submitted to the Conference Office and must show endorsement or involvement by a UCC congregation. These applications should be submitted to the SEC Office at least six weeks before the letter of endorsement is needed.

## **CONFERENCE CALENDAR, 1996**

### **FEBRUARY**

|                 |                                                                                        |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 17th – Sat.     | GA/SC Church & Ministry Committee, Atlanta Center – 9 a.m.                             |
| 18th – Sun.     | Ed preaches – Marietta, GA – Pilgrimage – 10 a.m.                                      |
| 21st – Wed.     | Ash Wednesday                                                                          |
| 24th – Sat.     | Conference Retreat Center Calling Committee Training – Pleasant Grove – 10 a.m.-4 p.m. |
| 23-25 – Fr./Su. | Conference Minister Search Committee Meeting (keep them in prayer)                     |
| 25th – Sun.     | Ed preaches – Church of the Savior, Knoxville                                          |
| 27th – Tues.    | Clergy Conversation – Chattanooga Pilgrim – 10 a.m.-2 p.m.                             |

## **MARCH**

|                 |                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1st – Fri.      | World Day of Prayer                                                                                                           |
| 9th – Sat.      | Annual Meeting Planning Committee meets – 10 a.m.-2 p.m.<br>GA/SC Executive Council Meeting – Atlanta Center – 9 a.m.-12 Noon |
| 11th – Mon.     | Clergy Conversation – Andalusia First – 6:30-9 p.m.                                                                           |
| 12th – Tues.    | Clergy Conversation – Lanett Congregational Christian – 10 a.m.-2 p.m.                                                        |
| 15-16 – Fr./Sa. | SEC Board of Directors, Atlanta, Simpsonwood – 6 p.m.-12 Noon                                                                 |
| 17th – Sun.     | One Great Hour of Sharing – All-Church Offering                                                                               |
| 19th – Tues.    | Clergy Conversation – Atlanta Center – 10 a.m.-2 p.m.                                                                         |
| 20th – Wed.     | Clergy Conversation – Nashville, Vanderbilt Seminary – 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.                                                      |
| 24th – Sun.     | Ed preaches – Savannah First – 11 a.m.                                                                                        |

## **APRIL**

|              |                                            |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 4th – Thur.  | First Day of Passover                      |
| 5th – Fri.   | OFFICE CLOSED FOR GOOD FRIDAY              |
| 7th – Sun.   | Easter – (Daylight Savings Time Begins)    |
| 16th – Tues. | Holocaust Remembrance Day                  |
| 20th – Sat.  | AL/TN Executive Board Meeting – Brookmeade |
| 22nd – Mon.  | Earth Day                                  |
| 22-24 – M/W  | Stewardship Meeting, Epworth by the Sea    |

## **MAY**

|                 |                                                                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12th – Sun.     | Ed preaches – Roanoke, Antioch – 11 a.m.                                 |
| 12-14 – Su./Tu. | Revival – Roanoke, Antioch – 7 p.m. – Guest “Revivalist,” Edwin Mehlhaff |
| 16th – Thurs.   | Ascension Day                                                            |
| 17-18 – Fr./Sa. | Uplands Board Meeting and 75 Year Celebration                            |
| 19-20 – Su./Mo. | Georgia Christian Council                                                |
| 25th – Sat.     | Called to Care Workshop – Atlanta – Leader, Geoffrey Black, UCBHM        |
| 27th – Mon.     | Memorial Day Observed                                                    |

31st – Jun. 2nd Fri. evening-Sun. Noon – SEC Annual Meeting –  
University of the South, Sewanee, TN

## **JUNE**

2-8 – Su.-Sa. Iowa-Southeast Workcamp – Pilgrim Heights  
Campground, Montour, Iowa

7-9 – Fri./Sun. Iowa Annual Meeting – Grinnell College (about 40 miles  
from the workcamp site).

23rd – Sun. Paul Sherry to preach at Birmingham Pilgrim – Lunch  
and conversation after service

27-30 – Th./Su. Third National UCC Women's Meeting – Boston,  
Massachusetts

## **JULY**

25-29 – Th.-Mo. 1996 National Youth Event – University of South  
Carolina, Columbia

## **AUGUST**

17th – Sat. GA/SC Church & Ministry Meeting – 9 a.m. – Atlanta,  
Center

## **SEPTEMBER**

6-7 – Fri./Sat. AL/TN Association Annual Meeting – Fairfield Glade  
Community Church

20-22 – Fr.-Su. Southeast Conference Women's Retreat – Shocco  
Springs, Talladega, AL

# **THE SOUTHEAST NEWS**

Published by the Southeast Conference

United Church of Christ

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Vice Moderator, Annie Neal  
Secretary, Susan Ewing  
Treasurer, David Speno  
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East Alabama-West Georgia Association Moderator, Jimmy Pilkington  
Georgia-South Carolina Association Moderator, Larry Calbert  
South Alabama-Northwest Florida Association Moderator, Jim Courtney  
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**The preceding was a transcription from the original publication, except for photographs and associated captions, a registration form for the Conference Annual Meeting on page 9, an advertisement for the UCC Office of Communication on page 10, and a registration form for the Third National Meeting of UCC Women on page 11. Neither the original nor the transcription are copyrighted or have rights reserved; they are in the public domain for free use. Copies of the original may be obtained from the Congregational Library, Boston, Massachusetts.**

**This transcription was recorded on October 22, 23, and 24, 2013 by Mike Stroud, director of Project 66-16, an initiative to record, compile and write the history of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ.**

PROJECT

